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## BIG-THREE COMPETITION REFLECTED IN EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

SINCE the Big Three are as yet unable to agree on the peace treaties that would rearrange the balance of power in Europe, they are viewing with the keenest interest the results of the national elections recently held in Czechoslovakia, France and Italy. Despite the important local problems at stake, the dominant question in each case was whether the voters would gravitate toward Russia or toward the United States and Britain. With the issue thus clearly joined, not only Moscow, but Washington, London and the Vatican attempted to exercise some degree of influence in the elections to secure the results they desired.

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA CONFIRMS PRO-SOVIET POLICY.** In the Czechoslovak elections of May 26 the emergence of the Communists as the strongest party marked a success for Russia's efforts to consolidate its position in Eastern Europe. The victorious Communists won the largest vote of any single party, and they have named as Premier Klement Gottwald, a former leader of the Comintern who spent the war years in Russia. To many Americans the results of these Czechoslovak elections have come as a shock. Not only has the United States generally assumed that no nation would freely choose a Communist Premier, but it has, somewhat complacently, clung to the memory of its role as godparent of the Czechoslovak republic during World War I. Americans have also tended to overlook the less flattering historical fact that the Czechoslovaks were deeply disillusioned with the West at Munich and assumed, rightly or wrongly, that Russia would have aided them against Hitler. Moreover, while the United States has talked only in general terms about a forthcoming economic agreement with Czechoslovakia, Moscow signed a bilateral trade treaty with Prague on April 10.

### FRENCH COMMUNISTS LOSE FIRST PLACE.

In France the political current appears to be running in the opposite direction from that in Czechoslovakia. In the national elections held on June 2 to choose a new Constituent Assembly that will write a constitution to replace the draft rejected by a majority of voters on May 5 — chiefly because its provisions for an all-powerful unicameral Assembly seemed to make possible domination by a Communist minority—the moderate Catholic Popular Republican Movement (MRP) replaced the Communists as the largest party. With the MRP in first place—but lacking a majority—the Communists running second, and the Socialists third, the French will probably be obliged to form another provisional tripartite régime, headed this time by Georges Bidault, leader of the MRP and the present Foreign Minister. Although the French elections have confirmed the anti-Communist trend indicated by the earlier referendum on the constitution, they have by no means assured France of greater political unity and stability. It will, in fact, be more difficult than ever for the MRP and Socialists to work with the Communists in the months ahead, for the recent electoral campaign was characterized by such rancor that virtually nothing remains of the common resistance front formed by these groups during the war.

Neither will it be possible for the great powers to forget the subtle maneuvering in which they engaged in order to influence the French elections. Britain and the United States clearly sought by indirect intervention to counterbalance communism in France by special pre-electoral moves, while Russia aided the Communist party. By what must be regarded as more than mere coincidence Britain declared on May 30 that it was going to arm a strong French air force with aircraft and equipment, and on May 28 the

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United States announced its loan to France. According to the terms of the comprehensive Franco-American trade and financial agreement, which goes into immediate effect, a credit of approximately \$1,400,000,000 will be extended to France to aid in national reconstruction. In addition, the cost of about \$1,800,000,000 worth of war-consumed lend-lease supplies will be cancelled, and the United States will sell France war surpluses valued at \$1,400,000,000 for \$300,000,000.

In all fairness it should be pointed out that Washington did not impose, either explicitly or implicitly, conditions of any kind on French domestic or foreign policy in return for the loan. Yet the financial agreement was unavoidably "political" in the broad sense of the word, since the prospect of immediate economic aid from the United States encouraged rank-and-file voters in France to support moderate political groups. The French Communists, clearly aware of the political implications of the loan, attempted to offset its influence in behalf of their opponents by declaring that their efforts for industrial reconstruction had been responsible for the American decision to grant credits to France. And in a further attempt to minimize the importance of American aid, they claimed that the "electoral

wheat" which Russia has sent France during the past two months has saved the nation's bread ration.

**PAPAL INTERVENTION IN ITALY.** In Italy the efforts of the Big Three to influence the outcome of the first free national elections in nearly twenty-five years—the results of which had not been tabulated as we went to press—were less direct than in France. At the same time, however, the fact that Britain and the United States opposed the collection of heavy reparations from Italy at the recent conference of Foreign Ministers and insisted that Trieste remain an Italian city, while Foreign Commissar Molotov supported the contrary point of view, was undoubtedly not overlooked by many Italian voters. But the most important intervention in the Italian elections was that of the Pope. In a broadcast to the College of Cardinals on June 1, Pius XII made the last in a series of pre-electoral appeals to the French and, more especially, to the Italians, against "state absolutism" and "the wreckers of Christian civilization." Although the Pope mentioned no parties by name and refrained from referring to the monarchical issue in Italy, he delivered one of the strongest attacks against extreme Left political groups that the Papacy has made in recent decades.

WINIFRED N. HADSEL

## REVIVING EUROPE SETS COURSE TOWARD SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

The results of post-war elections in many European countries confirm the conclusions reported last winter by the Foreign Policy Association\* that the prevailing trend on the continent is toward neither Right extremism nor communism. The middle-of-the-road social democracy which, with a very few exceptions, is gaining the ascendancy on the continent in spite of the bitter heritage of civil hatreds, hunger and material destruction left in the wake of war, is composed of two major elements, both unfamiliar to American politics: the Socialists (also known as Social Democrats) and the Catholic Socialists (variously known as Christian Democrats, Christian Socialists or, as in France, Popular Republicans).

**SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN ASCENDANCE.** The first of these major parties owes its inspiration to the principles of Marxism. The second draws its ideals from a series of Papal encyclicals advocating social reforms from the time of Pope Leo XIII to the present day. Both these groups which, with variations in relative strength, have won strong majorities in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Hungary, Austria, Norway and Denmark, as well as the United States zone of Germany, advocate nationalization of key enterprises affecting the public welfare, and both are fundamentally in agreement on the need for

far-reaching reforms that could assure not only political but also economic and social democracy. The most significant aspect of the gains made by these two parties is that their program appears revolutionary to a majority of Americans, but is welcome to British Dominions like Australia and New Zealand as well as the Labor government of Britain, whose sweeping victory at the polls less than a year ago in effect strengthened the trend toward social democracy on the continent.

It is of the utmost importance that this should be understood in the United States, for hitherto opinion here has tended to view the struggle for power in Europe solely as a struggle between American democracy and Russian communism. This view has to an increasingly dangerous extent obscured comprehension of developments on the continent, even among officials in Washington. In reality the struggle in Europe since the defeat of Nazism and Fascism has been between social democracy and communism—and the United States, by its fear of any movement labeled "socialism" has again and again, while vigorously denouncing Russia, imperiled the very elements on the continent that are most sympathetic to Western democracy, and most opposed to totalitarianism of either Right or Left.

**LEFTISM NOT ALL DUE TO RUSSIA.** The apprehension aroused in London and Washington by Russia's domination in the countries of Eastern

\*See V. M. Dean, "Daily Contacts in Europe Aid Russo-Western Understanding," *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, November 30, 1945; and *idem*, "U.S. Policy in Europe," *Foreign Policy Reports*, January 15, 1946.

Europe and the Balkans has led us to assume that in the few instances where Communists have shown strength this has been due entirely to Moscow's propaganda or threat of force. This theory has been gravely undermined, on the one hand, by elections in Hungary and Austria, which rolled up majorities for moderate and even conservative parties in spite of the presence of Russian troops, and on the other by admittedly free elections in Czechoslovakia, long regarded as an outpost of the West, where the Communist party registered the highest gains won in any country of Europe. It is true that the proximity of Russia does exercise an influence on neighboring countries. But that influence may prove to be detrimental, and not necessarily favorable, to Russia. At the same time it is entirely possible that, without interference by Russia, extreme Leftist movements will gain ground in countries where economic conditions are rapidly deteriorating, as in Austria, or which have little hope of finding economic stability except in cooperation with Russia, notably Czechoslovakia. It is this development which the United States has not sufficiently heeded.

With the disappearance of Germany, which was both the principal market and the principal source of manufactured goods for Eastern Europe and the Balkans, these countries are confronted with the alternative of either obtaining substantial aid from the United States and Britain, or of entering the economic sphere of Russia. What we must realize is that the United States, before 1939, played only an insignificant role in the trade of these countries, for the most part backward producers of agricultural products for which we have little need. Unless we either decide to make them gifts of manufactured goods or to open our markets to their products in payment for credits, we shall have to recognize the necessity they experience of trading with Russia. It is understandable that, in view of our major contribution to the common struggle for the defeat of the Axis powers, and of the undertakings made by Russia at Teheran and Yalta, we should feel that we have the right to demand free elections in countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans—notably Poland and Rumania—now governed by dictatorial régimes that bar opposition activities, and to criticize conditions in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, where

elections already held have proved unsatisfactory to us. But if we intervene in these countries against Russia, we must do so with the knowledge that their peoples have hitherto lacked the economic well-being and minimum education that would enable them to make what we could acknowledge as "free" choices.

**IS U.S. POLICY IN EUROPE REALISTIC?** There are many obvious reasons why the United States fears and distrusts Russia. But if this country, as some propose, should now adopt the position of regarding war with Russia as inevitable—a view described by General Eisenhower on June 2 as "vicious"—it should do so at least with fuller understanding of the issues at stake in Europe than is now usually displayed. Historians will argue for years concerning the moot question whether Russia created an "eastern" bloc which inevitably brought about a "western bloc" or, as Mr. Churchill put it at Fulton, Mo., a "fraternal association" of the United States and Britain; or whether the Western powers, by secrecy about the atomic bomb and attempts to acquire new strategic bases, fanned Moscow's fears of a Western coalition. What is clear is that, since the end of the war, the policy of the United States has been based, in rapidly increasing measure, on the assumption that Russia is the enemy of the Western world; and that setbacks for communism will bring about in Europe restoration or establishment of "free enterprise," of capitalism, and of institutions patterned on American democracy.

If that is, in fact, the basis of our policy in Europe, then we may soon discover that we are operating on assumptions that are not realistic. We cherish our way of life, find it peculiarly suited to our needs, and would understandably resent attempts by other countries to alter or destroy it. But it might be well for us to ask ourselves whether our way of life is equally suited for other countries whose experience differs from our own—for China, or India, or Russia, or even most of Europe? The choice today is not between capitalism and communism. To an extent that will some day profoundly surprise us, the peoples of Europe, Asia and Latin America, while rejecting the totalitarianism of communism, find themselves out of sympathy with the materialism of American society, and are seeking a course that would combine political liberty and cultural and moral values with social and economic progress. In this respect—much as this, too, may surprise us—there is a closer "fraternal association" between the British under a Labor government and the social democratic régimes of Europe than between Britain and the United States; and a greater area of common experience between all those who in Europe suffered terror and starvation in the fight against Nazism, including the Russians.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

(The second of two articles on possible next steps in disputed areas.)

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## UNSETTLED CONDITIONS CONFRONT CHINA-BOUND AMERICANS

SHANGHAI, MAY 14.—What is probably the first American passenger ship to reach Shanghai since 1941 has just discharged its Shanghai-bound travelers. We landed today, about 170 strong, after a 15-day trip on the converted troop ship, *Marine Falcon*. The passage has had special significance, for the arrival of this private vessel without commercial cargo is a step toward resuming normal communications between China and the United States, severed by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

**UNCERTAINTY ABOUT CHINA.** The passengers on the *Marine Falcon* seemed about as random a group of persons with business in China as one is likely to find. Not all were United States citizens, for there were Chinese, British subjects, Canadians, Swedes, Swiss and others; but the 80-odd Americans who debarked at Shanghai are symbolic of America's interest in China. They fall into four main categories: missionaries, government personnel (chiefly UNRRA, but also some soldiers), businessmen, and a miscellaneous group consisting largely of the wives and children of men already working in China.

It was encouraging to note that, while a patronizing attitude toward China was shown by some passengers, the "Old China Hand" spirit was not much in evidence. Many of the passengers were new to the field of Chinese affairs and had had no opportunity to acquire prejudices that pre-war treaty-port experience frequently imparted to their predecessors. There was also an unspoken awareness that China in the long run will become a great power, despite current difficulties, and that foreigners who approach the Chinese in a condescending manner are out of step with the trend of events. But perhaps the main point is that the Western position in the Far East has been thoroughly shaken up, and no one on board was quite certain how his or her affairs would work out after we reached Shanghai.

**HOPES FOR THE FUTURE.** Although uncertainty was a major theme, it was mingled with strong overtones of optimism and a desire to come to grips with the problems of operating in China. The missionaries in the main looked forward to building anew, although many of their hospitals, schools and church buildings were destroyed during the war. Particularly interesting was the Episcopalian deaconess who, under a cooperative arrangement with the China Aid Council, a relief organization in New York, carried with her a quantity of penicillin cultures as well as various materials useful in the de-

velopment of penicillin. These supplies will be utilized partly by Mme. Sun Yat-sen, widow of the great Chinese nationalist leader, in her medical work, and partly by the deaconess, who will take her share to Hankow which, she hopes, will become a center for penicillin production and distribution in West Central China.

The UNRRA group of some 20 men and women reflected the variety of rehabilitation, as well as relief tasks undertaken by that organization. There were specialists in child care, relief administration and social work, a public health nursing consultant, an oral surgeon, a radio engineer, a distribution supervisor, various administrators and others.

The comparatively small business group consisted of individual traders, as well as technical and office staff people for firms like the National City Bank, British-American Tobacco Co., Socony Oil, etc. This slight business representation reflects principally the caution with which American and other foreign firms are viewing the chaotic political and economic conditions of postwar China. Although China offers a field of operations for some importers and exporters and for certain of the larger companies, the dominant current note seems to be one of caution in approaching this market.

**NEED TO UNDERSTAND CRUCIAL ISSUES.** The effectiveness of individual Americans in China in the years ahead will depend largely on the political and economic conditions under which they will have to operate, especially those affecting Russo-American relations. Yet there was virtually no discussion of crucial Far Eastern issues among the passengers—partly because the news supplied to the ship by radio in two weeks of bulletins contained but one brief reference to China, and partly because of the newness of many of the people to the China field.

Nevertheless, the absence of vigorous concern about the issues confronting American policy-makers in China cannot but be disturbing. The role of the United States in Far Eastern affairs is indicated by the many cargo ships and naval vessels anchored in Shanghai waters, as well as by the smaller American naval craft which swarm in the harbor. But mere physical power will not be enough to make an intelligent, effective policy possible if Americans in general show a lack of awareness and active interest in current Chinese conditions.

LAWRENCE K. ROSINGER

(Mr. Rosinger is spending four months in China and Japan to gather first-hand material for FPA publications.)

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